IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the originally filed Abstract with the following:

~~A system and method for merging two rulesets provided in rule-based systems associated with originating applications executing at different locations, each ruleset comprising rules in potential conflict with each other, and each ruleset being in a different rule format, the method comprising: communicating the rulesets to be merged over a distributed network to an assimilator service device for receiving each ruleset; providing a merge policy to the assimilator device, the merge policy comprising a set of specifications of partially-ordered priorities and/or mutual-exclusion constraints; translating the rulesets into a common core representation capable of being implemented in any logic program rule engine provided in a rule-based application at any location; assimilating the rulesets to produce a new merged ruleset comprising logic required for resolving potential conflicts among rules in accordance with the merge policy, where the new merged ruleset is in a common core representation capable of being implemented in any logic program rule engine provided in a rule-based application at any location; translating the new merged ruleset into one of the originating application's rule format; and communicating the translated new merged ruleset over the distributed network to one of the originating applications.~~

--A system and method for merging two rulesets provided in rule-based systems associated with originating applications executing at different locations, each ruleset comprising rules in potential conflict with each other, and each ruleset being in a different rule format. The rulesets to be merged are communicated to an assimilator service provided with a merge policy comprising a set of specifications of partially-ordered priorities and/or mutual-exclusion constraints. The rulesets are translated into a common representation capable of being implemented in any logic program rule engine provided in a rule-based application at any location. The rulesets are

assimilated to produce a new merged ruleset comprising logic required for resolving potential conflicts among rules in accordance with the merge policy that is implemented in any logic program rule engine provided at any location. The new merged ruleset is then translated into one of the originating application's rule format.--